

Published in numerous magazines and presented as a touring exhibition in museums, galleries and public buildings around the world, the photographs in *Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years* will be viewed by millions of visitors.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years

From its beginning in 1965 the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition has been a pioneering display of "photographic hunting," drawing tens of thousands of entries by professional and amateur photographers around the world. From that overwhelming display of talent, a panel of judges selects winning photographs in 14 categories.

- > Mammals
- > Birds
- > Amphibians and Reptiles
- > Invertebrates
- > Plants and Fungi
- > Underwater Species
- > Earth's Environments
- > Black and White
- > Natural Design
- > World in Our Hands
- > Special Award: TIMElapse
- > Special Award: Wildlife Photojournalist of the Year
- > Special Award: Rising Star Portfolio Award
- > Special Award: Wildlife Photographer of the Year Portfolio Award

Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years showcases 200 of the most beautiful and memorable pictures selected from the competition's 50-year history. The photographs are organized chronologically within these groups and each picture caption puts the image in context, bringing out its importance as well as telling the relevant story.

These photographs celebrate our planet's rich array of life, reflect its beauty and highlight its fragility. They also tell the story of how the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition has marked the development of nature photography over the past half century and how the very best images should be valued as art of a high order.

The photographic competition is owned by the BBC, famous for popular TV shows about the Earth's wildlife and wild places, and the Natural History Museum in London, UK, founded in 1753 and arguably the world's most prestigious such institution.

Rosamund Kidman Cox was editor of BBC *Wildlife Magazine* for 23 years and has been a judge of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition since 1981.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years

How Wildlife Photography Became Art

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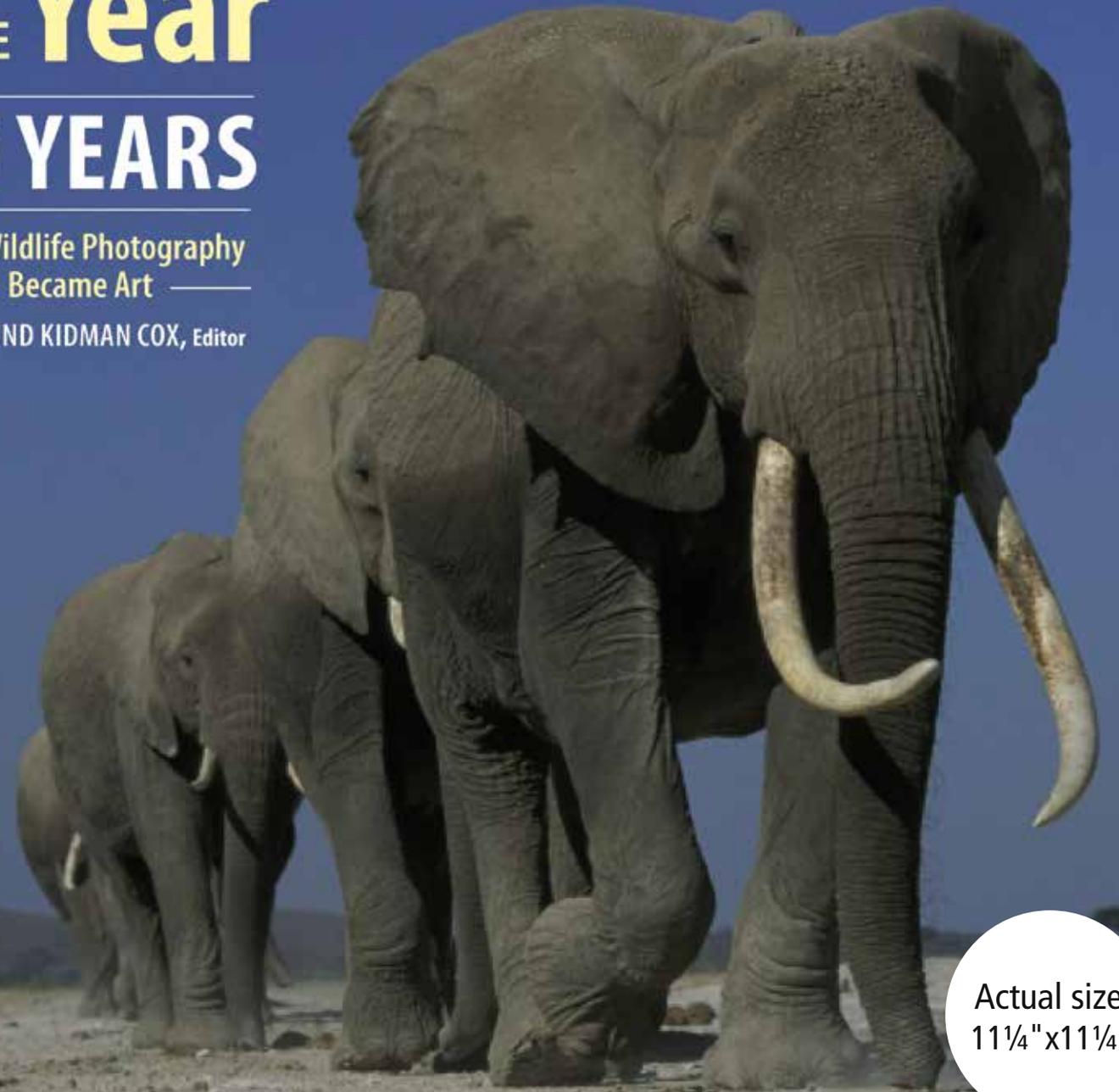
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Wildlife Photographer OF THE Year

50 YEARS

How Wildlife Photography
Became Art

ROSAMUND KIDMAN COX, Editor



Actual size:
11¼"x11¼"

The art of seeing

A camera takes a picture, but it's the photographer who chooses the composition and often the image as an artistic creation, and it is that act of selection that is the main part of the art. Photography is more than just a planning, knowledge and the acquisition of technique – but for a picture to be seen as more than a faithful record of a subject or scene requires a composition that connects with the viewer's emotions and imagination. It is those connections that the judges of the competition search for. And it is the best of those that survive whether or not their choices have been right.

The best picture best, allowing us to look and look again with pleasure. Sometimes there is an element that a picture should convey something, make a statement, sometimes a picture is chosen for its beauty. Often times it has a quiet appeal, and it's the little things and not the obvious ones that make it work. But a winning picture is chosen rightly.

What is fascinating when looking at this gallery of pictures as a whole is that so many of the older film images (20 or so years before the advent of digital) are still among the very best. Often it's not a matter of photons or depth of field – rather depth of feeling. It is submitted that the photographic art of the last century has, many of them, been set on top of the world. Indeed, some of those unforgettable pictures have influenced a generation. The theme is that they are not just included in the finest collections of photographs etc.



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35



Great bear, little fox

This is another extraordinary picture that, 20 years on, remains unimpaired. It has both intimacy and grandeur – the former is a story of survival. The polar bear alone creates the feel of a vast, unyielding wilderness, stretching to the horizon. It shows Father Bear alone at the onset of winter – hunting ground for polar bears. The bear and the little Arctic fox stand looking towards the setting sun, as if about to begin their journey. The bear will hunt on the ice, and its little cub will grab scraps from the dining table. This was the first polar bear picture not only to win the main award but also to be entered in the competition. It took 20 years and some 85,000 frames to achieve what remains one of the photographer's most treasured images.

Thomas & Margherita 1994 1994

Wasp on a leaf

The picture is a close-up of a wasp on a leaf, showing the intricate details of its anatomy and the texture of the leaf. The wasp is positioned in the center of the frame, with its body and legs clearly visible against the green background of the leaf. The lighting is soft, highlighting the fine hairs and the segmented structure of the wasp's body.



Flourish

A striking shot of a leopard in a savanna landscape, captured by a professional photographer. The leopard is in motion, walking through tall grass. The image is a close-up, focusing on the leopard's body and the texture of the grass. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights, emphasizing the leopard's spotted coat and the natural environment.

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The tree cut

This image captures the intricate patterns of a tree trunk, showing the concentric rings of wood and the texture of the bark. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the natural beauty and complexity of the tree's structure. The small, dark object in the center adds a point of interest to the composition.

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This is a photograph of a large, textured, reddish-brown surface, possibly a rock formation or a piece of wood, with a small, dark object in the center. The image is a close-up, focusing on the natural beauty and complexity of the tree's structure. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the natural beauty and complexity of the tree's structure.

